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For information regarding the EMR-ISAC visit www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac or contact the EMR-ISAC office at: (301) 447-1325 and/or emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov.

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Distracted Driving a Problem for First Responders

California recently ran numbers for 2013 accidents and found that in about 180 cases, distracted drivers of emergency vehicles were to blame. That number is up from 2012. The statistics include fire trucks, ambulances, and police cars.

The causes of this rise are likely much the same for the rest of the [distracted drivers on the road](#) – more mobile technology with more bells and whistles. While first responders now use job-related in-car computers, it is important to note many accidents due to technology-related distracted driving happened when personal cellphones or other devices were being used, and some were linked to hands-free technology.

Agencies are encouraged to review internal policies and guides relating to the use of cellphones (personal or work), in-car computer systems, and other mobile devices. Individual first responders are also urged to be conscious of their driving habits. Place mobile devices away from reach, set the device on a “stand-by” mode, or otherwise ignore it. The lives of the public – and your lives – may depend on it.

(Source: [Los Angeles Daily News](#))

New First Responder Crude Oil Reference Guide

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) are working with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) to develop incident management “best practices” reference materials for emergency responders to prepare them to safely and effectively respond to crude oil transportation incidents. Subject matter experts from public safety, railroads, government, and industry met in June 2014 to develop a reference document for first responders.

The result of the meeting is the [Commodity Preparedness and Incident Management Reference Sheet](#) (PDF, 175 Kb). The document contains incident management best practices for crude oil rail transportation emergency response operations, including a risk-based hazardous materials emergency response operational framework.

The framework gives first responders key planning, preparedness, and response principles to successfully manage a crude oil rail incident. It also assists fire and

emergency services personnel in decision-making and developing an appropriate response strategy to an incident (i.e., defensive, offensive, non-intervention).

(Source: [PHMSA](#))

Cyber Security Month and the Internet of Things

Workplaces and agencies have a growing reliance on technology embedded with sensors and an ability to communicate that goes beyond the machine-to-machine connection we are all used to. As a collective, it is now being referred to as the Internet of Things. It includes vehicles with built-in sensors, medical monitoring devices, electric meters, door locks, and infrastructure monitoring mechanisms (on bridges, rail lines, etc.), among other things.

Those in the Emergency Services Sector may come into contact with the Internet of Things on a daily basis and not really consider the implication. Within the past several years, security of these types of technology has been called into question. Hackers have [taken control of insulin pumps](#) remotely, and [many question the security of computer-controlled systems in vehicles](#) that control everything from brakes to locks to engines.

As part of [National Cyber Security Awareness Month](#), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will be hosting a Twitter chat Thursday, October 16, at 3 p.m. entitled "[Securing the Internet of Things](#)." The chat will focus on securing devices that connect to the Internet.

For more information and a list of other events, visit the [National Cyber Security Awareness Month](#) website.

(Source: [DHS](#))

Changes to Ground Ambulance Equipment List

Seven national-level medical organizations came together this year to issue a 2014 Joint Policy Statement detailing equipment that should be available on ground ambulances in the United States. Last revised in 2009, the list is available online free of charge courtesy of the journal [Prehospital Emergency Care](#) (PDF, 63.8 Kb).

The list is divided into several sections: requirements for Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Life Support (ALS), a list of optional equipment and medications, extrication equipment, and additional equipment needed for interfacility transport. The list also specifies ambulance needs for pediatric patients and some needed skills of EMS workers as defined in the National EMS Scope of Practice. It is important to note air medical transport is not covered in this list.

A [summary of the changes](#) (PDF, 555 Kb) is also available along with some discussion explaining why certain choices were made. Many changes are in terminology or description only; some items, such as folding stretchers, were changed from "required" to "optional." Also of note are changes in language within the document to accommodate state, local, and regional licensing, training, or educational regulations.

(Source: [Prehospital Emergency Care](#))

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